



# *The Army's* Chesapeake Review *March 1998*



## Federal Agencies Committee Meeting Highlights

A Federal Agencies Committee (FAC) meeting was held on March 5, 1998, at the U.S. Forest Service, Auditor's Building in Washington, D.C. Announcements and highlights from this meeting included:

- The U.S. Army Environmental Center (USAEC) will host a stormwater management workshop, focusing on non-point source challenges and solutions, at the Patuxent National Wildlife Visitor's Center in Laurel, MD on June 11, 1998.
- Fort Meade will be conducting a BayScapes planting on May 20, 1998. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is also developing a BayScapes planting site for its new lab facility, which is being built on Fort Meade.
- Legacy funds have been attained to help installations with their riparian forest buffer efforts. Grants for \$2,000 are available to installations for Earth Day activities. Riparian Forest Buffer Workshops are being developed to provide natural resource managers with hands-on experience and information.
- The final draft of the Clean Water Action Plan, instigated by Vice President Gore in response to the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Clean Water Act, includes over 100 key action items. These items focus on establishing greater integration between federal agencies, building bridges between water quality and natural resource programs, accelerating restoration, and encouraging leadership and collaboration by local communities and stakeholders. A budget is being developed to implement the plan. Copies of the plan are available at [www.epa.gov/cleanwater/action](http://www.epa.gov/cleanwater/action).
- The Land Growth and Stewardship Committee has agreed to consider Department of Defense (DoD) installations for its Bay Partners Community Award program.
- DoD is participating in the Businesses for the Bay toxics reduction program by being a mentor.
- The federal agencies' Riparian Forest Buffer Implementation Plan is due by June 1998. Efforts are underway to include small landholders in the plan and to communicate with non-land management agencies, such as the Department of Transportation or the National Resource Conservation Service, to see if they can provide any assistance.

## Implementation Committee Meeting News

An Implementation Committee (IC) meeting was held on March 12, 1998, at the Chesapeake Bay Program Office (CBPO) in Annapolis, Md. Announcements and highlights from this meeting included:

- Analysis of the 1997 water quality in the Chesapeake Bay is available on the CBPO's homepage. The analysis includes month-by-month data and graphs on stormwater temperatures, dissolved oxygen, water clarity, and salinity levels in the Bay.
- The Information Management Subcommittee is trying to establish a land use/land cover database that consolidates all agency data in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. The subcommittee reported on the current status of these data and recommended steps to achieve the joint database.
- The Nutrient Subcommittee is hosting an Urban Stormwater Management Workshop on May 19<sup>th</sup> in Dumfries, VA.
- The Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee is developing a series of realistic scenarios to determine a goal for the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem in the year 2030. STAC hopes to use the information from these scenarios to provide critical information to policy and management decision-makers to help them determine long-term impacts and goals. STAC has developed a Chesapeake Futures Workgroup to focus on population and socio-economic changes, landscape changes, technological improvements, and future estuarine conditions.

## State of the Bay: River Flow

Scott Phillips, of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), reviewed the 1997 freshwater flow into the Chesapeake Bay at the March 12<sup>th</sup> IC meeting. Measurements from stream gages indicated that stream flow into the Bay was below average in 1997. Typically, 50 billion gallons of water flow into the Bay per day. In 1997, river flow averaged only 42 billion gallons per day. In January 1998, however, freshwater flow set an all time record when 152 billion gallons per day were measured at stream gages.

According to Phillips, there are a number of correlations between flow and other parameters in the Bay. High flow years generally mean depressed salinities, lower dissolved oxygen levels in the bottom of the Bay, and high nutrient levels.

Tom Cronin, USGS, continued the presentation by discussing the effects of flow on living resource. According to Cronin, changes in flow cause major changes in dinoflagellate cyst (non-Pfisteria dinoflagellates) and phytoplankton populations. Research is underway to determine if there are any changes to other living resource populations, particularly fish, with alterations in flow.

Cronin noted that land clearance and high runoff in the 1880s to 1930s permanently decreased salinity levels in the Bay. Since this time period, Bay salinity levels have been hypersensitive to changes in flow. Flows have been high and variable in recent years. Since high flows mean high hypoxia (low dissolved oxygen levels), hypoxia levels have been reaching all time highs in the Bay.



# QMB Delineates FY99 Legacy Pre-proposals



**Chris Landgraf, Fort A.P. Hill, talks to QMB members about the post's warm season grass plots and grassland management plan.**

Fort A.P. Hill, in Bowling Green, VA, hosted the DoD Chesapeake Bay Program Quality Management Board (QMB) meeting on February 24, 1998. The QMB is composed of Bay service coordinators and installation personnel who represent DoD on one or more Bay Program subcommittees or workgroups. The committee was designed to bring together DoD Bay representatives every quarter to review the latest Chesapeake Bay Program information, incorporate the latest initiatives of the Bay installations' environmental programs, and evaluate DoD progress in achieving Bay Program initiatives.

LTC Craig Wonsidler, Fort A.P. Hill's commander, opened the meeting by welcoming the participants to the Virginia installation. Following the welcome, Terry Banks, natural resources coordinator, and Chris Landgraf, environmental specialist, gave a tour of the installation and its environmental projects. The first stop was the Headquarters' Memorial Garden. The garden was established in June 1996 to honor Virginia Medal of Honor designees and to act as a living classroom of famous and historic trees and urban landscaping. The tour proceeded to a field where the installation is testing warm season grasses to reduce its mowing needs while creating habitat for quail and other ground nesting birds. The third tour site was the post's combination Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit (ROWPU), full closure float bridge, and field NBC decontamination site. The site was stabilized in 1996 with cable concrete, layered stone roads, and stormwater conveyance channels to prevent the negative impacts that repeated training can have on the environment. The tour continued to the construction site of the central vehicle wash facility, which is scheduled to be completed in fiscal year (FY) 1998. The new facility will close the existing 11 satellite wash facilities and will provide a closed loop system that will recycle water and prevent wastewater from entering nearby streams and wetlands. The tour concluded at a pond where Fort A.P. Hill is trying to reestablish a population of bald cypress that was once a prevalent tree in the area.

Following the tour, the meeting commenced with a discussion about upcoming DoD-sponsored workshops. The U.S. Army Environmental Center (USAEC) is preparing a stormwater workshop for June 11, 1998, at the Patuxent Na-

tional Wildlife Visitor's Center (contact Helene Merkel, Horne Engineering Services, at (703) 641-1100 for more information). DoD will be conducting two riparian forest buffer workshops. The first will be held on March 31, 1998, at the Naval Weapons Station in Yorktown, VA. The second will be hosted by Fort Detrick, MD on April 30, 1998 (contact Aileen Smith, DoD Bay Coordinator, at (757) 322-2895 for more information).

Ms. Smith reported that the DoD Legacy Resources Management Program allocated \$300,000 for DoD Chesapeake Bay Program support. Approximately one-half of this amount will be used for water quality monitoring and submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) restoration. Starting in the fall of 1998, water quality testing will be conducted at five installations. Five other installations will be inventoried to see if they can support SAV populations. These data will be used to determine SAV restoration locations.

The remainder of the Legacy funds will be used to restore and track riparian forest buffers. Seedlings have been ordered from state nurseries. Planting efforts are scheduled for the fall of 1998, using the Conservation Corps to help plant the trees.

Following these announcements, the committee proceeded to brainstorm on pre-proposal ideas for Legacy FY99 funding. The committee concentrated their efforts on projects that utilize a multi-service approach to achieve Chesapeake Bay Program objectives.

The pre-proposals for Legacy FY 99 were due on March 6, 1998. Of 16 proposed ideas, 9 were submitted for DoD consideration. These nine project ideas included the following:

- Invasive species (focus on the removal of such species as phragmites, kudzu, and purple loosestrife)
- SAV
- Conservation landscaping
- Riparian forest buffers
- Shoreline stabilization, renaturalization, and erosion and sediment control
- Stormwater management
- Watershed protection – installation community outreach and clean water/small watershed initiatives
- Oyster reef establishment
- Workshop/conference at Fort Myer

The next QMB meeting is scheduled for June 3, 1998, at Bolling Air Force Base in Washington, D.C.



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